

definite This, anyhow, is one of the hundreds
of significant
points which they interweave into their survey
In the great range of ten volumes dedicated to
the history
and interpretation of our local government,
the "peaks"
are the second half of the volume entitled
Statutory Authorities
for Special Purposes, and the volumes devoted
to the history
of the *Poor Law* Here, the last two volumes
have the
distinctness and the actuality that belong to a
record of
events in which the writers were personally
engaged,
moreover, the material, inasmuch as they are
here dealing
with a single and separable branch of local
government
and one that is of immediate, even of political,
relevance,
is less unmanageable, more compact, much
more easily
shaped, than that of many of the companion
volumes As
a piece of sustained analysis, the *Poor Law*
books are
masterly

In 1921, the Local Government series
was broken
by the appearance of one of the most significant
of
their books, *The Consumers' Co-operative Movement*
Its
Preface so clearly sets out both the great
importance the
authors attach to this study, and the place it
occupies in
their work, that it is simplest to quote its
words—

" The reader will find in this book, not a
history of the Co-
operative Movement in Great Britain, but a
descriptive analysis
of its present position, with a survey of its
relation to other
manifestations of Democracy and of its
possibilities for the future
"We have now been for thirty years
investigating and des-
cribing democratic institutions, and only
in the twenty-ninth
year¹ did we publish any volume dealing

with national government or the Political State. We started at the opposite end, not only because the other manifestations of Democracy—in Trade Unionism and consumers' Co-operation, and in the various developments of Local Government—had been neglected by other writers on Political Science, but also because, to us as Socialists, these other manifestations seemed actually of greater importance than the Political State itself. For we have

1920 *A Constitution for the British Socialist Commonwealth*